

PRATESI, S. et al.

Appl. No. To be assigned

US National Phase of PCT/EP02/14893

June 28, 2004

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

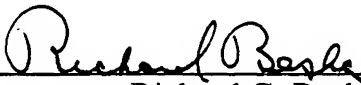
The claims have been amended to reduce the filing fees, without prejudice.

The specification has been amended to include a cross-reference to the parent applications and to include the abstract.

An early and favorable action on the merits of the claimed invention is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By:   
Richard G. Besha  
Reg. No. 22,770

RGB:ecb  
1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22201-4714  
Telephone: (703) 816-4000  
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100